GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RAILWAYS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1991
ANSWERED ON:29.11.2007
SHIMLA TOY TRAIN IN THE WORLD HERITAGE LIST
Kharventhan Shri Salarapatty Kuppusamy

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have taken any steps for getting the Shimla Toy Train included in the World Heritage List;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the team from `International Council on Monuments and Sites` has inspected the Shimla Toy Train;

(d) if so, the details of its findings;

(e) whether the Kalka-Shimla Railway (KSR) is facing frequent technical problems resulting in stoppage of train services at many times; and

(f) if so, the action taken thereon?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU)

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Ministry of Railways submitted an application to UNESCO (United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization) in January`2005, for the inscription of the Kalka-Shimla Railway (KSR), as a World Heritage Site, serial to `Mountain Railways of India` (that includes Darjeeling Himalayan Railway and Nilgiri Mountain Railway). Since UNESCO considered only one site per country per year in 2006, KSR was not presented and India`s other nomination was not successful. Similarly, KSR was not presented in 2007 and India`s other nomination, viz. The Red Fort, was inscribed as a World Heritage Site. A revised application in a new format applicable from 2007 was submitted to UNESCO in January`2007. This is being considered by UNESCO and a team from International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) inspected the KSR in September`2007.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) A team from the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), an organ of UNESCO for cultural heritage sites, inspected the KSR in September`2007. Based on their report and recommendations, further examination of the application will be done internally by ICOMOS & UNESCO and KSR may come up for consideration to be listed as a World Heritage Site in the next session of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee in Canada in July`2008.

(e) Yes, Sir.

(f) Technical problems faced in the operation and maintenance of the KSR are being attended regularly. The inspection of track, bridges and tunnels are being done as per schedule laid down and necessary maintenance works/renewal are being done regularly. Moreover, as a direct result of widening and repairs of road formation located just above the rail alignment, the train services affected from time to time.